

July 16, 1999

5184 '99 JUL 20 P12:30

Dockets Management Branch (HFA-305)
Food and Drug Administration
5630 Fishers Lane, Room 1061
Rockville, MD 20852

Re: Docket #98N-1038 irradiation in the production, processing and handling of food

Dear Sirs:

I am not a hippie, a radical or a Luddite. But I have discovered that the difference between organic food and most of what we get at the grocery store is immense – and worth the price differential. I recently read email communications from two Planned Parenthood volunteers in Albania. I was amazed, at first, at their frequent references to how good the food was. In Albania! But then I figured it out: of course they are eating organic food.

I really hate what is happening to food, and to agriculture, in this era. I know we can't stop 'progress' – we certainly can't stop globalization and the power of corporations. But at least I should know what I am eating!

There is really no excuse for not requiring labeling – understandable to ordinary consumers – so we will know whether the food we are purchasing is irradiated. If you allow producers to use words like "cold pasteurization," you are failing consumers. I know irradiation destroys vitamins; if it becomes necessary to purchase irradiated food, I – and other consumers – need to know so we can be sure to get enough vitamins in our diet. Some of us take these things seriously! And I know irradiation makes other changes in food – taste and texture, for example. If I ate an unlabelled item, it would be easy to assume it was old, or spoiled, if one didn't know that irradiation was responsible for the changes in the item.

I know you are under tremendous pressure from corporation who have a lot to gain from this procedure. Please take seriously your responsibility to Americans who have no one else to protect them.

Sincerely,



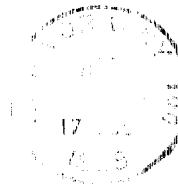
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